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# SOCIOLOGY OF THE CHINGALEE TRIBE, NORTHERN AUSTRALIA

By R. H. MATHEWS

In an article contributed to the Anthropological Society of Washington in 1900,<sup>1</sup> I published a table showing the eight intermarrying sections of the Chingalee tribe, which occupies an extensive tract of country about Powell's creek and Newcastle waters, in the Northern Territory, a name given to the northern portion of South Australia. In 1905 I contributed another paper,<sup>2</sup> in table II of which I gave examples of marriages which I distinguished respectively as Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4 wives.

During 1906 I completed some further investigations which enable me to report that among the members of the Chingalee tribe, the name of the section of a given individual is amended or changed altogether when he or she has passed through the ordeal of initiation. I will explain the circumstances which led up to this important discovery, which has never before been reported. For some years past I have been collecting details of the sociology of several tribes in the Northern Territory, Western Australia, and the northwest portion of Queensland, by means of correspondents resident in various places in the regions mentioned. I was frequently puzzled to find that a correspondent in one part of a tribe's domain would send me the names of the eight sections with full particulars of their intermarriage and devolution, whilst another equally capable informant in another part of the hunting grounds of the same tribe would send me a set of eight sections, varying more or less in the form of the names, but exactly the same in all other respects. I concluded that there must be some reason for this difference, and asked my friends to make independent inquiries from different individuals in the same locality, as well as from old and

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<sup>1</sup> *American Anthropologist*, N. S., II, pp. 494-501, with map.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, pp. 303-304.

young members of the same tribe. After a good deal of patient work on the part of my correspondents and myself, we found that children of both sexes had a somewhat anomalous sectional nomenclature compared with that of the adults.

It was among the tribes about Hall's creek, in the Kimberley district of Western Australia, that my attention was first arrested in regard to these apparent irregularities. One correspondent gave me Chauarding for a section name which evidently corresponded with Jungary of the table sent by another inquirer, and so on. I at length succeeded in obtaining tolerably full confirmation of my conclusions, and am now able to supply an example of the variations in the section names of the Chingalee tribe.

TABLE I

Cycle	Masculine Section Name		Feminine Section Name	
	Before Puberty	After Puberty	Before Puberty	After Puberty
A {	Chukala	Chungalee	Ongalla	Nungalee
	Chulamah	Chula	Arlinginyu	Nala
	Tapala	Taralee	Ehralee	Naralee
	Chupadee	Tungaree	Ambadee	Nungaree
B {	Chakadē	Chimitcha	Narbeeta	Namitcha
	Chunamah	Chuna	Ahmana	Nana
	Tampalillee	Champachina	Nabachakadu	Nampachina
	Chumadē	Chemara	Chupadinnee	Nemara

I will leave the above table to speak for itself and pass on to show analogous differences in the section names of some tribes in the northwest districts of Queensland. In an article presented to the Anthropological Society in 1899 I published a table of the adult forms of the eight intermarrying sections in the locality mentioned, and I ask the reader to refer to that table.<sup>1</sup> Among the blacks therein represented, Narachoo is used from birth to puberty instead of Burrаланjee; Blaniwoo instead of Bolanjee; Boonongoona instead of Kommeranje; Warkee instead of Narrabalanjee; and Thimmermill is the juvenile form of Yakamurri.

<sup>1</sup> *American Anthropologist*, N. S., 1, p. 596; *Jour. Roy. Soc. N. S. Wales*, xxxiii, p. III.

In another paper published in this journal in 1900 I submitted a table showing the adult forms of the eight sections of the Lunga and other tribes in the Kimberley district of Western Australia, to which the reader is referred.<sup>1</sup> In these tribes we find that the adult form of the section name Jakara is known as Changarra from birth to puberty; Janima is Chau-an; Jungary is known as Chau-arding; and Julimar is called Chu-a-ru until puberty is reached.

Among the tribes mentioned in both the preceding paragraphs, there are two forms of all the male and female section names, the same as in the Chingalee.

Referring further to the Chingalee marriage regulations I would like to state that when Spencer and Gillen visited that part of Central Australia they prepared a table to the effect of the one given below.<sup>2</sup> The sections which marry one with another and the denomination of the resulting offspring are of course identical in all respects with the information given in my tables published in this journal,<sup>3</sup> but Spencer and Gillen arranged the sections differently in their table, for the purpose of making them fit in with paternal descent.

TABLE II

Moiety	Husband	Wife	Offspring
Willitji	Chimitcha	Chungalee	Taralee
	Chuna	Chula	Tungaree
	Tungaree	Champina	Chuna
	Taralee	Chemara	Chimitcha
Liaritji	Chungalee	Chimitcha	Champina
	Chula	Chuna	Chemara
	Chemara	Taralee	Chula
	Champina	Tungaree	Chungalee

Spencer and Gillen profess to have discovered that the first four names in the "husband" column are called by the collective name of *Willitji*, and that the remaining four men in that column are known collectively as *Liaritji*, thus constituting two independent moieties,

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit., N. S., II, p. 186.

<sup>2</sup> *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 100.

<sup>3</sup> *American Anthropologist*, N. S., II, p. 495, with map. Ibid., VII, pp. 301-304.

in each of which the fathers are said to transmit their moiety names to their sons from generation to generation. This succession holds good only while the four men of a so-called moiety marry No. 1 or No. 2 wives; when we come to the progeny of No. 3 or No. 4 wives the succession of the men collapses altogether.

For example, let us suppose that each of the first four men in the "husband" column of the above table marries a No. 3 wife. Then we shall find that Chimitcha marries a Chuna woman and has a son Chemara; Chuna espouses Chimitcha and has a son Champina; Tungaree weds Taralee and his son is Chula; and Taralee marries a Tungaree wife and his son is Chungalee. These four sons belong to the moiety Liaritji, as we see by the table, instead of to the Willitji moiety like their fathers. If the four "husbands" of our example had married No. 4 wives the result would have been the same.

It is evident that half of a man's possible wives and half of his possible families would belong to the Willitji moiety, and half his possible wives and families to the Liaritji moiety—the section and the moiety of the children depending altogether upon the mother in every case that can possibly occur. We have therefore demonstrated that the four "husbands" of our example are sometimes the fathers of Willitji children and sometimes of Liaritji children, according to the women whom they marry. Moreover, for incontrovertible evidence of the custom of marrying the four kinds of wives which I have described as Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4, the reader is referred to the list of living examples of such marriages reported by me in a previous communication.<sup>1</sup>

Whatever may be the signification of the terms *Willitji* and *Liaritji* it is abundantly clear that they cannot be the names of two independent moieties, because as shown above the sons of Willitji men are liable to be scattered at random through all the sections of the entire community. The partition of the tribe into two parts, Willitji and Liaritji, utterly fails either to prove descent of the sections through the men or to establish exogamy of the moieties.

Spencer and Gillen assert that the eight sections of the Warra-

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<sup>1</sup> *American Anthropologist*, N. S., VII, pp. 303-304. See also other lists in other publications.

monga tribe are divided into Uluuru and Kingilli; that the Umbaia are divided into Illitji and Liaritji; that the Wargaaia are divided into Uluuru and Biingarau; that the Bingongina are divided into Wiliuku and Liaraku, and so on.<sup>1</sup> Examination of the tables given by the authors in all of these tribes fails to prove that a single one of the so-called "moieties" has perpetual succession through the men or through any other channel, without which any bisection of a tribe must fall. I have elsewhere spoken of these tables as "un mélange confus et hétéroclite."<sup>2</sup> The classification of the women into two sets or cycles as exemplified in my table of 1900, already cited, is the only division known to me in which each set has immutable succession within itself.

Another table can be formed by taking a category of four sections of women from among whom four specific sections of men are bound to obtain their wives, whether of the No. 1, 2, 3, or 4 designation. Such a table has previously been given in this journal,<sup>3</sup> to which the reader is referred. That table does not, however, profess to exhibit a partition of the tribe into two independent portions. The quartette of men do not reproduce themselves in the next generation; neither do the quartette of women. All that is aimed at in the table of 1905 is to bring together the four different sections of men and women who can marry one another, and enable us to see at a glance who are the potential conjugal mates of any given man or woman. Further study of the subject will reveal to us that my table of 1900 does not illustrate exogamy; neither does my table of 1905; neither does Spencer and Gillen's table. It is therefore obvious that notwithstanding our repeated attempts to divide a tribe into two such parts that the men of one part shall marry the women of the other part, and such women only, we are met with disappointment in every case. The conclusion therefore seems inevitable that there is no absolute exogamy in any of the tribes under discussion.

PARRAMATTA,  
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<sup>1</sup> *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 101 and 102. From information supplied by reliable correspondents I had previously reported the intermarrying sections of all the tribes mentioned.

<sup>2</sup> *Bull. Soc. d'Anthrop. de Paris*, VII, série V, p. 173.

<sup>3</sup> *American Anthropologist*, N. S., VII, p. 302.